

Children and Families First Commission
of
Santa Clara County

Minutes

February 13, 2002

1. CALL TO ORDER/ROLL CALL

The regular meeting of the Children and Families First Commission (CFFC) is called to order by Vice Chairperson Tomalinas at 10:11 a.m. in the Chambers of the Board of Supervisors, County Government Center, 70 West Hedding Street in San Jose, California. A quorum is present.

Members Present

Robert Sillen
Fred Ferrer
Sarah Akemi Flynn
Cora Tomalinas
Cynthia Wheeler Ruby

Members Absent

Blanca Alvarado
Will Lightbourne
Caroline Panches

One Vacancy

2. PUBLIC COMMENT

There are no public comments.

3. APPROVE MINUTES - January 9, 2002

On motion of Commissioner Ferrer, seconded by Commissioner Ruby, it is unanimously ordered that the minutes of January 9, 2002 be approved, as submitted.

4. PROGRAM DEVELOPMENT AND COMMUNICATIONS COMMITTEE REPORT

a. Discuss CFFC 2002 Communications Plan

Juana Guevara, CFFC Media/Communications Consultant, references a draft document entitled *Children and Families First Commission of Santa Clara County Annual Communications Plan 2002*, and provides an overview of the objective, program strategy, and targets of the proposed Public Communications Campaign. She continues by outlining the promotional activities and the various methods of informing the public of the CFFC endeavors and initiatives and for delivering the core messages of the CFFC to target

audiences. In addition, she highlights the strategies and tactics outlined in Phases I through IV of the proposed 2002 Public Communications Campaign.

In response to an inquiry from Commissioner Ferrer relating to clarification of the "core messages" of the CFFC, Ms. Guevara indicates that the core messages are derived from the Strategic Plan that the CFFC adopted in June 2000. Commissioner Ferrer requests that the specific core messages be incorporated into the CFFC 2002 Communications Plan, and Commissioners concur.

Commissioner Sillen refers to page 5 and requests that the Phase I Task List be updated to include the tasks and target dates that the Program Development/Communications Committee and the full Commission will consider and/or review.

Discussion ensues among Commissioners relating to providing input to the core messages prior to public dissemination and incorporating a promotional approach to the Public Communications Campaign. Commissioner Ruby requests that a CFFC media policy be developed including provisions on how the CFFC should be referenced in the media and possibly incorporating the policy as a contractual requirement for CFFC community partners.

Commissioner Ferrer suggests that a priority be established during Phase I to focus on CFFC core messages in tandem with CFFC Initiatives and other community messages and during Phase II primarily focus on issues relating to children ages 0 to 5.

Ms. Guevara advises that staff will incorporate the comments received today into the CFFC 2002 Communications Plan. However, she requests approval on two specific tactics: the CFFC Preview Event scheduled on February 27, 2002, and the virtual pressroom on the website.

Karen Blinstrub, Executive Director, CFFC, advises that the Preview Event is a media event highlighting the funded CFFC Initiatives and that Chairperson Alvarado has approved all press releases for this event. Further, she notes that the purpose of the virtual pressroom is to provide flexibility for retrieving information in a choice of electronic formats and that new content will not be added.

On motion of Commissioner Sillen, seconded by Commissioner Ruby, it is unanimously ordered that the tactics be approved for Phase I of Public Communications Campaign relating to launching the

Children and Families First Commission of Santa Clara County Initiatives and creating the virtual pressroom on the Web to provide flexibility for retrieving information in a choice of electronic formats.

Further, that staff be requested to revise the CFFC Annual 2002 Communications Plan for consideration at the March 13, 2002 regular meeting.

b. Review Childcare Facilities Enhancement Grant Final Report

Jolene Smith, Deputy Director of Programs, CFFC, introduces David Grady, newly hired Quality Assurance Manager, CFFC, and states that Mr. Grady will provide the quality assurance monitoring function relative to the \$2 million of CFFC funding allocated for the 185 Childcare Facilities Enhancement Grants and the 29 Barter Loans last year.

Mr. Grady references a document dated January 25, 2002, entitled *Contract Status Report Childcare Facility Enhancement Barter Loan Agreement*, and states that the funding range for the Childcare Facilities Enhancement Grants was \$1,000 to \$9,000, and the range for the Barter Loans was \$10,000 to \$50,000. Further, Mr. Grady comments on the status of monitoring of the childcare facilities that received grants.

Ms. Smith apprises the Commission of the 55 childcare slots that have been created in lieu of payment by childcare provider recipients of the Barter Loans. Further, she provides an overview of the CFFC Childcare Scholarship Program developed in partnership with Choices for Children, Community Child Care Council of Santa Clara County Inc., PACEAPP, and the Santa Clara County Social Services Agency. Ms. Smith notes that those slots will be filled by granting childcare scholarships to families within the 75 to 100 percent state median income level. In addition, Ms. Smith summarizes the participant requirements and the review, application, screening, and referral processes. She states that the slots are two-year commitments and that CFFC will monitor the slots.

In response to an inquiry by Commissioner Sillen, Ms. Blinstrub provides clarification on differences between the Childcare Facility Enhancement Grants and the Barter Loans. Commissioner Sillen requests that future Contract Status Reports include award amounts, more detail about unfilled Barter Loan slots and strategies for filling them, of all Childcare Facility Enhancement Grantees and Barter Loan Grantees.

In response to a concern raised by Commissioner Sillen relating to No. 4 of the Contract Status Report, Pending Issues, Mr. Grady provides an update regarding the delayed commencement of construction by MFA Construction Company for two Childcare Facility Enhancement Grant recipients.

Ms. Blinstrub advises that the deadline for expenditure of allocated funds by the Childcare Facility Enhancement Grantees was June 30, 2001 and that staff has provided the Commission with detailed status reports at previous meetings. Commissioner Sillen requests that future reports the beginning and ending dates of the contracts.

Commissioner Sillen references the Childcare Scholarship Program informational sheet and requests that "ages 0-5" in paragraph one and that "infancy and 5 years of age" in paragraph two be revised to reflect the policy of CFFC to provide services to children ages "0 to the sixth birthday."

Discussion ensues relating to information included on the Childcare Scholarship Program informational sheet reflecting that families who are not eligible for state-funded childcare subsidies qualify for free childcare and that the Childcare Scholarship Program is a voluntary service that is independent of CalWORKs, alternative payment programs, and other state-funded childcare subsidy programs. Ms. Smith clarifies that the program is intended for families who are not associated with any other subsidy programs and Commissioner Sillen suggests that the form be reorganized to clarify this point.

Further discussion ensues relating to the CFFC policy of providing a continuum of care, the importance of consistency in providing services for families and children, prenatal up to the age of five, and not past the sixth birthday. In addition, Commissioners discuss translating the program forms into languages other than English, conducting business in English and providing translating assistance to families, and the practice of eligibility workers filling out the forms for the families. Commissioner Ferrer clarifies that the form in question is completed by eligibility workers, and not families.

Ms. Smith notes that not all Barter Loan recipients opened childcare slots, and one center will provide parent education classes and family support services. Further, she indicates that she will discuss Commissioner comments with the Childcare Scholarship Program partners regarding the forms and will report back at the March 13, 2002 regular meeting.

Children and Families First Commission Minutes
February 13, 2002

Vice Chairperson Tomalinas expresses appreciation to staff and Commissioners for participation in the discussion.

c. Discuss Arts & Enrichment Grant Final Report

Lisa Ramirez, Consultant, Arts Enrichment Program, introduces herself and provides an overview of her background and experience relating to art enrichment activities. Further, she provides an overview of the draft Arts Enrichment Program Outline and highlights the proposed program concept, program description, arts enrichment services menu for a multi-level program, potential promotional and educational materials, and program development and planning in coalition building and collaboration. Ms. Ramirez continues by outlining potential activities relating to language arts, theatre, music, history and social studies, self esteem, special populations, and theme-based workshops.

In conclusion, she notes that the proposed Arts Enrichment Program would be developed in conjunction with the early Childhood Development Services for the School Readiness Sites and the Regional Partnership Groups and, if the Commission approves the outline today, a full implementation plan will be developed.

Commissioner Ferrer comments favorably on the Arts Enrichment Program Outline and suggests that the Implementation Plan include a review of the State Preschool Arts Enrichment Guidelines, consideration of the literacy levels of families and incorporation of different levels of access to the program, collaboration with and enhancement to existing programs in the community, partnerships with the child care community as a means of accessing children and their families, and the inclusion of the goals of the program.

In response to an inquiry by Commissioner Flynn relating to development of the administration of the proposed program in-house or releasing an Intent to Negotiate, Ms. Smith advises that the direction from the Commission was to consider a stipend effort. However, she states that this effort is still in a fact finding stage and, if the Commission has no objection to the outline today, staff will develop the goals and strategies and present a draft to the Program Development/Communications Committee and the Personnel and Finance Committee prior to presenting a final draft to the full Commission.

Ms. Blinstrub advises that a draft Arts Enrichment Program Implementation Plan will be provided at the April 10, 2002 regular meeting.

d. Accept Update On Quality Assurance

There is no update.

- e. Accept Update On Corporations For Standards And Outcomes Relating To Evaluation And Data Gathering

Wally Anderson, Consultant, Corporations for Standards and Outcomes, introduces himself and provides a brief update on efforts to develop the infrastructure for gathering and evaluating the data on all existing grants that were awarded last year and in preparing to implement the School Readiness Initiative.

In response to an inquiry by Commissioner Sillen, Mr. Anderson provides clarification relating to his role establishing the software to track the outcomes of CFFC funding and the contract monitoring functions of Mr. Grady.

5. DISCUSS CHILDREN AND FAMILIES FIRST COMMISSION 2002 WORKPLAN

Ms. Blinstrub references the draft CFFC 2002 Workplan and provides a brief overview of recent activities including updating the CFFC Bylaws and Ordinance.

Commissioner Sillen suggests that staff consider adjusting the timeframes for some activities. Ms. Blinstrub indicates that many of the projects and activities scheduled for the first half of the year are related to established timeframes.

6. DISCUSS STEERING COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATIONS RELATING TO THE FORMATION OF THE CFFC ADVISORY COMMITTEE

Commissioner Flynn references a memorandum dated February 5, 2002 from the Steering Committee relating to the formation of the required CFFC Advisory Committee and provides an overview of the recommended Advisory Committee Guidelines including the purpose, objectives, role, and composition. Further, she advises that the Steering Committee will meet again and further define the member selection process.

Paula Lacey, Director of Special Projects, CFFC, notes that the Steering Committee is requesting Commissioner input relating to the purpose and objectives and will identify the specific number and type of positions and develop a process for selecting members and the chairperson at the next meeting. She states that the final Advisory Committee Policy will be considered by the Commission at the March 13, 2002 regular meeting.

(Commissioner Ruby leaves her seat at 11:50 a.m.)

In response to an inquiry by Commissioner Sillen relating to the proposed lack of inclusion of a representative of the general public on the Committee, Ms. Blinstrub responds that an Advisory Committee is required for all CFFCs and that the proposed composition is to provide "professional and technical" assistance and support for the work of the Commission.

Vice Chairperson Tomalinas expresses concern that only four Commissioners are present to vote on this issue. Susan Levenberg, Assistant County Counsel, Office of the County Counsel, advises that although five members constitute a quorum, the CFFC Bylaws allow the Commission to continue the meeting after a quorum is established, and at this point today any action can pass with an affirmative vote of three members.

On motion of Commissioner Ferrer, seconded by Commissioner Sillen, it is unanimously ordered on a vote of 4-0, with Commissioners Alvarado, Lightbourne, Ruby, and Punches absent, that the Advisory Committee Guidelines be approved as recommended by the Steering Committee.

On order of the Vice Chairperson, there being no objection, the agenda is taken out of order.

8. EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S REPORT

a. Discuss Office Space

(Commissioner Ruby takes her seat at 11:58 a.m.)

Ms. Blinstrub references her Executive Director Report dated February 5, 2002, and briefly provides an overview of the office space needs for CFFC staff. Further, she requests approval to hire a consultant to conduct an assessment of the need for office space and requests that authorization be delegated to the Personnel and Finance Committee to approve an expansion of the lease for 1150 South Bascom Avenue in San Jose, if the findings support the need for additional space. Ms. Blinstrub notes that the next Personnel and Finance Committee meeting is next week.

On motion of Commissioner Sillen, seconded by Commissioner Ferrer, it is unanimously ordered that a consultant be hired to conduct an assessment of the need for office space.

Further, that authorization be delegated to the Personnel and Finance Committee to approve an expansion of the lease for 1150 South Bascom Avenue in San Jose, if the findings of the consultant support the need for additional space.

b. Discuss Increase In Dues For The California Children And Families Association

On order of the Vice Chairperson, there being no objection, this item is held to the March 13, 2002 regular meeting.

7. ACCEPT UPDATE ON CFFC PREVIEW EVENT SCHEDULED ON FEBRUARY 27, 2002

Barbara Bernard, Technical Assistance Manager, CFFC, provides a brief overview of the itinerary of the CFFC Preview Event scheduled on February 27, 2002, at the Wyndham Hotel in San Jose. Further, she states that the event is scheduled from 9:00 a.m. to 1:30 p.m. and invites all Commissioners to participate.

(Commissioner Flynn leaves her seat at 12:03 p.m.)

9. COMMISSIONER REFERRALS

There are no Commissioner referrals.

10. ANNOUNCEMENTS

Ms. Levenberg apprises the Commissioners that they should have received copies of the Statement of Economic Interests Form 700 and states that Commissioners or staff may contact her if they need assistance or have any general questions.

11. ADJOURN

On motion of Commissioner Sillen, seconded by Commissioner Ruby, it is ordered that the meeting be adjourned at 12:06 p.m. to the next regular meeting of the Children and Families First Commission scheduled on March 13, 2002, at 6:30 p.m. at the Jose Higuera Adobe Park, Park Victoria and Wessex Place in Milpitas, California.

Respectfully submitted,

Mary Trozzolillo
Deputy Clerk of the Board